I just called to sing . . . I love you

Gannett News Service

Tone-deaf sweethearts who just want to call and say "I love you" can rely on the pros and "mail" a musical Valentine over the phone lines, courtesy of Send-A-Song.

Send-A-Song is "for people who can't say (I love you) in a way they want, so they use the lyrics and music to express themselves," says Dan Price, the venture's co-founder.

The sappy idea spawned three years ago from some practical brainstorming.

Dan and Tim Price, northern Virginia brothers, were wondering how they could benefit from voice processing technology – that telephone wizardry that allows companies to interrupt your dinner with automated sales calls.

"There's got to be something good to come out of that technology," says Dan Price, 36, remembering the birth of his business.

The brothers remembered how their younger sister, Eileen, who would sing her sisterly feelings onto their telephone answering machines.

"If you didn't call her for three weeks, she'd sing 'You Don't Send Me Flowers Anymore,' " Dan Price says.

Figuring that the greeting card industry has made billions from people's inability to express themselves, the Prices invented Send-A-Song, where customers use minute-long snippets of musical hits to say what they feel.

Customers call 1 (800) SEND-A-SONG and are coached by a recorded voice that asks what song they want to send and to whom they want to send it. Callers choose from a 175-song playlist – from Bing Crosby's "Happy Birthday" to Sister Sledge's "We Are Family" – and add a 20-second personal message.

The computer dials the recipient and leaves a message if he or she is not in. A live operator will follow up if the call is disconnected or someone refuses to take a message. Dan Price says 98.5 percent of calls go through. Money is refunded for those that don't.

Send-A-Song, which can be ordered minutes or months before a special occasion, costs $9.95 per song or, as a special Valentine's Day package, $19.95 to send three songs.

Top Send-a-Song songs

Top Send-A-Song selections sent for Valentine's Day 1993:

Men:

1. "I Just Called To Say I Love You," performed by Stevie Wonder
2. "Have I Told You Lately (That I Love You)," Rod Stewart
3. "Unchained Melody," Righteous Brothers

Women:

1. "I Just Called To Say I Love You," Stevie Wonder
2. "I Will Always Love You," Whitney Houston
3. "Crazy for You," Madonna

ACT III THEATRES
WE'RE BIG ON BARGAINS
$3.00 FOR MOST SHOWS BEFORE 6:00 P.M.
* STARRED ATTRACTION: No Passes or Special Admission Tickets accepted at this time. TIMES VALID TODAY ONLY

LACEY CINEMAS
459-0960 4331 MARTIN WAY

LIAM NEESON, BEN KINGSLEY
A Film By STEVEN SPIELBERG
SCHINDLER'S LIST
R
(4:15 @ $3) 8:15

MRS. DOUBTFIRE
starring ROBIN WILLIAMS, SALLY FIELD
PG-13
*(3:45 @ $3) 7:00 • 9:45
No passes or Monday disc.

TOM HANKS, DENZEL WASHINGTON
PHILADELPHIA
PG-13
(4:00 @ $3) 7:15 • 10:00

JACK LEMMON, WALTER MATTHAU, ANN-MARGRET
GRUMPY OLD MEN
PG-13
(2:50 • 5:10 @ $3) 7:30 • 9:55

Gerard Depardieu
My Father the Hero
PG
(3:05 • 5:20 @ $3) 7:25 • 9:35
No passes

Nick Nolte, Albert Brooks
I'll Do Anything
PG-13
*(2:40 • 5:15 @ $3) 7:40 • 10:10
No passes or Monday disc.

RICHARD GERE, SHARON STONE
A MARK RYDELL FILM
INTERSECTION
Make every move as if it were your last.
R
(3:00 • 5:30 @ $3) 7:50 • 10:05

IRON WILL
PG
(2:30 • 4:50 @ $3)

Madeleine Stowe
BLINK
R
7:10 • 9:30

STATE TRI-CINEMAS
357-4010 204 E. 4th AVE.
$1.00 ALL SEATS • ALL SHOWS

MY LIFE
MICHAEL KEATON
PG-13
7:00
9:20
JURASSIC PARK
PG-13

Kenneth Branagh, Emma Thompson
Much Ado About Nothing
7:15
9:30
The Wedding Banquet

MASK OF THE PHANTASM
BATMAN
PG
7:30
9:40
COOL RUNNINGS
PG

MOYER THEATRES
CAPITAL MALL
754-8777
302 CAPITAL MALL
THURSDAY STUDENT NIGHT
PRESENT YOUR CURRENT I.D. AND RECEIVE A $3.00 ADMISSION ON ANY SHOW EXCEPT STARRED ATTRACTIONS
BARGAIN MOVIES EVERY DAY!
BARGAIN TIMES ARE IN BRACKETS
★ Indicates Special Engagement
No passes, coupons, "Tightwad Tuesday," or evening discounts. Bargain times still apply.

PG	SHADOWLANDS (1:30 4:15) 7:00 9:30
★ PG13	ACE VENTURA (1:15 3:15 5:15) 7:15 9:15
PG	REMAINS OF THE DAY (1:15 4:00) 6:45 9:30
R	THE GUNMEN (12:45 3:00 5:15) 7:30 9:40

"BREATHTAKING... EXHILARATING...A TRIUMPH!"
Vincent Canby, THE NEW YORK TIMES
holly hunter harvey keitel sam neill
the Piano
a jane campion film
R
READ THE MIRAMAX BOOK
MIRAMAX
CAPITAL MALL
754-8777
302 CAPITAL MALL
Starts Tomorrow

DAN AYKROYD JAMIE LEE CURTIS ANNA CHLUMSKY AUSTIN O'BRIEN
My Girl is back...
just in time to be your Valentine!

my girl 2
COLUMBIA PICTURES
A BRIAN GRAZER/IMAGINE FILMS ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTION, A HOWARD ZIEFF FILM, DAN AYKROYD JAMIE LEE CURTIS
ANNA CHLUMSKY AUSTIN O'BRIEN "MY GIRL 2" CLIFF EIDELMAN DAVID T. FRIENDLY HOWARD ZIEFF JOSEPH M. CARACCIOLO
JANET KOVALCIK BRIAN GRAZER HOWARD ZIEFF
PG
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Starts Tomorrow

"TWO THUMBS UP!"
-SISKEL & EBERT
I'LL DO ANYTHING
PG-13
DOLBY STEREO
COLUMBIA PICTURES
A COLUMBIA PICTURES RELEASE
MATINEES DAILY
LACEY CINEMAS
459-0960 ACT III
NOW SHOWING